Abstract

Introduction: Individualized nutritional support is important to pediatric cancer patients and should be integrated to the overall treatment of these patients. Objective: Analyze the nutritional status of cancer patients submitted to enteral nutrition (EN) and assess the adequacy of this form of nutrition. Methods: A case series study was carried out at the Pediatric Oncology Unit of the Institute of Integrative Medicine Professor Fernando Figueira (IMIP, Brazil, Recife-PE) between January and December 2009. Clinical and anthropometric data were obtained from medical charts and nutritional follow-up charts. Z scores for height for age, weight for age and body mass index for age indicators (H/A, W/A and BMI/A, respectively) were calculated using the AnthroPlus® program. Caloric and protein requirements were calculated based on the recommendations of the Brazilian National Council of Oncologic Nutrition. Results: At the beginning of EN, 32.4% of the sample had short stature and 23.9% were underweight based on the BMI/A indicator. The assessment of EN adequacy demonstrated that 49.3% reached the caloric requirements and 76.1% reached the protein requirements, with maximal intakes of 65.6 Kcal/Kg/day and 1.95 g of protein/kg/day. Malnourished patients had greater mean Z scores for W/A and BMI/A at the end of EN, whereas no significant changes were found among patients with adequate nutritional status and significant reductions in these indicators were found among those with overweight or obesity. Conclusion: The patients either maintained or achieved a significant improvement in nutritional status, which demonstrates the importance of nutritional support and follow up during hospitalization.

Keywords

Nutritional status, Enteral nutrition, Tube feeding, Cancer, Children.